

1560/582.

MECHANICUS

AND

FLAVEN:

OR, THE

WATCH SPIRITUALIZED.

METHODS

AND

THE

OF THE

WATCH SPIRITUALISM.

MECHANICUS

AND

F L A V E N :

OR, THE

WATCH SPIRITUALIZED. .

By JOHN MARTIN,

Watch-maker, of *Spalding, Lincolnshire.*

All thy Works praise thee, O Lord, and thy Saints
shall bless thee. *Pf. cxlv. 10.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. KEITH, at the *Bible* and
Crown, in GRACECHURCH-STREET.

M. DCC. LXIII.



1560/582.

MECHANICS

AND

FLAVIN:

OF THE

WATCH SPIRITUALIZED.

BY JOHN MARTIN,

Watch-maker, of Spalding, Lincolnshire.

All the Works printed there, O Lord, and thy Signs
Small shall there be, as in the

LONDON:

Printed for G. KEITH, at the Bible and
Quay, in GRACECHURCH-STREET.

M.DCC.LXXXI.



QOS

VERSES

SENT TO THE

AUTHOR,

FROM AN

UNKNOWN FRIEND.

Believer, when beholding me,
An emblem of thyself here see.

My springs are hid from outward shew,
My beating pulse conceal'd from view,
And yet my face the hours disclose ;
Th'effect appears, tho' hid the cause ;
My work admitting no delay,
I constant serve thee, night and day.
So, Christian, let thy inward light,
Enjoy'd in Christ, appear in fight :
Let outward works to all proclaim
Thy faith unfeign'd in Jesus' name.

What

What God hath join'd let none divide;
No truth that's good it's fruit can hide :
But let not works assume Christ's place ;
Thou'rt justify'd alone by grace :
Thus faith and works in love agree :
This lesson, Christian, learn of me.

WOBURN, BEDFORDSHIRE,

O^c. 3, 1763.

P R E F A C E

TO THE

R E A D E R.

FRIEND,

IF thou art a serious observer of the day in which the all-wise God has brought us upon the stage of this world, you must know practical religion loses ground, and that vice and immorality are pouring like much water, in a narrow channel, down our streets: our privileges are great, and yet our glory is our shame. Custom, that tyrant, bears down all opposition, and few dare be so singular as to say, "as for me
"and my house, we will serve the
" Lord."

“ Lord.” — “ Christ crucified,” is “ to most “ foolishness ;” and “ what “ shall I do to be saved ?” is now thought to be a symptom of insanity.

But does this prove man’s case to be better’d ? or should it be sufficient to make any hide their talent, though but one, in a napkin ? No ; rather may it provoke every one to do their utmost to suppress such aboundings of sin, in such a way and manner as the Lord shall enable them, and be least intruding on their other relations in life, which may not be neglected. — A firm belief of this has engaged me to dedicate my spare hours in compiling the few following sheets ; which is an account of such spiritual improvement as the Lord was pleased to let the execution of my business furnish me with. The manner in which it appears, I found, upon trial, to be the easiest I could

could chuse, to convey my meaning to others, and to make the articles taken notice of, to be plainly understood by those who were ignorant of the business; while at the same time, I trust, the candid judge will say it is as near the truth as could, in this manner, be inserted.—

Wherever I have been indebted to any one, or have enriched my little tract with the observations of others, whether from the scriptures or authors, I have, to the best of my remembrance, acknowledged it by such marks as these, “ ”, and, in general, according to the letter, ^a, ^b, ^c, &c. have directed the reader to its native place. It gives me great satisfaction to know, that a considerable part of the holy word is founded on such reflections, and therein God is pleased to speak to the eyes as well as the ears of men, varying his address according to the strength he imparts, and always remembering we are

b

but

but dust and ashes ; as his dealing with Israel of old, in sacrifices, the metaphors in Solomon's Song, the language of the prophets, and the ministry of our blessed Lord abundantly confirm. I trust this will be sufficient to shield me from a supposition that I have taken any undue liberty with the glorious names of the undivided Trinity ; especially since our Lord, when he would increase our watchfulness, condescends to say, I come as a thief in the night : nor should it be thought unwarrantable if I have made one thing prefigure several, and sometimes quite opposite to each other, since, tho' a thief in that instance is a type of Christ, yet in more he is a type of Satan.

The blessings God has bestowed on labours of this kind made me more willing to comply with the request of several Christian friends in the publication,

cation, by whose information, and my own knowledge, I am made acquainted with the remarkable success that has attended Mr. Hervey's Meditations, Mr. Flavel's Husbandry and Navigation, the Pilgrim's Progress, and several other tracts of Mr. John Bunyan; and tho' my piece may be destitute of some particular that may have rendered them so instructing, yet I have the happiness of knowing that the same glorious truths, tho' in a broken manner, are here insisted on, and attempted to be made plain.

The similitude might be greatly increased, and a great many new ones produced; but as I knew not but this small sketch might occasion a more able pen to draw a more finished draught of both watch and clock, I thought this might suffice; and if it shall serve as an introduction to any thing of this kind,
I shall

I shall think my labour well bestowed ;
 but rather shall rejoice if it shall furnish the ignorant with profitable recreation, or be blessed to but one soul whom the Lord has chose for himself. If this should be the case, I shall be abundantly recompensed for every mark of contempt I'm expectant the author and his performance will be had in by some. Yea, shall God but convince me (be that as it may) that herein his glory is sought, Jesus is exalted, and the creature debased, I doubt not but to reflect on its publication will give great satisfaction to thy unworthy servant in the Lord,

JOHN MARTIN.

MECHANICUS
AND
FLAVEN:
OR, THE
WATCH SPIRITUALIZED.

WHERE tempers are united, and grace is possessed, there seldom fails of a thirst for communion ; our friends enjoyed this happiness. — Mechanicus and Flaven were residents under the same roof. — Their intercourses were frequent, and their pursuits uninterrupted. — As the generality of their discourses were with a view to glorify God, and be edified, to the spiritualizing common objects were in general their plan for so exalted

2 MECHANICUS *and* FLAVEN, *or*

a purpose. — Flaven being the greater adept in this enriching employ, he was always had in that reverence that was due from his friend; which, at the same time, was returned to Mechanicus, in paying a due regard to his superior judgment in those things Flaven was the less acquainted with. —

Mechanicus's employment, the watch-branch, though sufficient to furnish them with a variety of matter, had hitherto been neglected. While one day Flaven, having discharged the particular duties his office required, was resolved upon a visit, as usual, to his friend; when after the customary enquiries, "conversation took the following turn." ^a

Fla. The apostle James informs us, that "the Lord giveth liberally and "upbraideth not."^b I think in nature, my friend's employment is a strong confirmation

^a See the introduction to Theron and Aspasio, vol. I. p. 2.

^b James i. 5.

firmation of this truth ; else how could so wonderful a machine be brought to such perfection ?

Mec. How, indeed ! I heartily wish the many ingenious artists of our faculty were more sensible of this important truth. But alas !——

Fla. Mankind, in general, are too apt to say, “Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this.” To me, after every necessary means is made use of, David’s acknowledgement is comely : “ the Lord teacheth my hands to war :”^a A firm belief of which clips the wings of that pride so attendant on our imperfect performances, and serves as a ladder, the ascending whose rounds leads us to admire the wisdom of God in man.— But is not Mechanicus apprehensive, that amidst so many different operations, and such a multiplicity of articles, there is not room for spiritual observation?

B 2

Mec.

^c Deut. xxvii. 27.

^d Psal. xviii. 34.

4 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or

Mec. A variety, no doubt, though nothing further than private reflection has, as I know of, been yet attempted.—

Fla. As so fair an opportunity offers, furnished with your assistance, and a sufficiency for inspection, suppose we this evening attentively survey what may appear worthy our regard, and without offering violence, bear a similitude to something of more importance.

Mec. At this time nothing can be more acceptable, as the day's application has much fatigued my spirits. I shall be glad of a release upon such terms, and doubt not but Flaven's remarks will be a good reward for the short account I can give him of this curious structure.

Fla. First, then, let us consider the materials made use of.

Mec.

Mec. Except the gilding, the whole is brass and steel ; which, being but a composition, reduces it to copper and iron.

Fla. Had we beheld the coarse and stragling particles, torn from the bowels of the earth, would it not amaze us to think of the strange revolution they must sustain ere they could possibly make the appearance they now do. — To some, no doubt, it would appear incredible, and in vain might arguments be produced to make the certainty appear : So, when this more noble structure, the human body, is well considered, and found, with the royal prophet, to be “ fearfully and wonderfully made,” how astonishing to know, notwithstanding this, “ we are “ but dust and ashes.”^f

Mec. Or if we consider the other parts of creation, and view the kingdoms

^e Psa. i.

^f Psa. i.

6 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or

doms of this world, how wonderful to know they rose alone by virtue of an almighty power !

Fla. Nor is it less strange to contemplate the reviving thoughts of a glorious resurrection, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal, immortality.—Men in lead mines don't expect to meet with gold, nor in gold, lead.

Mec. Such contrarieties are not usual ;^s “ a fountain cannot send forth
“ sweet water and bitter ; nor do men
“ gather grapes of thorns, or figs of
“ thistles.”

Fla. But in the stupendous work of the resurrection what confusion appears ! All manner of matter is blended together : if we are surprized at the perfection of your watches, and that is increased by seeing it in the womb of
the

^s Jam. iii. 11.

the earth, how shall we express ourselves on consideration of this glorious display of the unlimited power of the most High !

Mec. Might we ransack the grave, to behold the face of any departed friend, how would his fallen countenance discompose us, and we should be apt to think he never made that figure in life, we so well remember !

Fla. But to conceive that the most deformed of God's people shall, in the morning of the resurrection, be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body," is yet more distant from the dictates of reason; and this is yet more aggravated by a consideration of the little regard some time paid to the deceased body.— Who could bring to our sight the whole of my departed friend, though but a few years he should have been tenant of "the house appointed for all living," even if his beloved relatives had walled;

8 MECHANICUS *and* FLAVEN, *or*
walled him round with brick or stone.
If impracticable this, how much more
so the many thousands that have been
destitute of such a tender care, or those
on whom the raging fire, or relentless
waves, have exercised their cruel rage !
a thought of this, joined with God's
sufficiency, no doubt accompanied Job,
who said, " If a man die, shall he
" live again.^k"

Mec. It seems he could scarce credit it.

Fla. You much mistake the good man's meaning : no one clearer in this than Job : in the midst of his unparallel'd troubles, it was his principal, perhaps his only stay : hence he says, ^l" I
" know that my redeemer liveth, and
" that he shall stand at the latter day
" on the earth, and though after my
" skin, worms destroy this body, yet
" in my flesh shall I see God ; whom I
" shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall
" behold, and not another ; though my
" reins

^k Job xiv. 14.

^l Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

“reins be consumed within me.” He therefore is to be understood exulting in the truth, and taking comfort from it, rather than depressing of it, seeing his belief therein makes him say, “all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come; for (adds he, speaking of this powerful God) thou shalt call, and I will answer; for thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.”^m

Mec. In this particular I am agreeably deceived, and indeed, as Paul says, “why should it be thought incredible with us that God should raise the dead?”ⁿ

Fla. In what condition do you receive the watch at first.†

Mec. I know not better how to inform you, than by saying all things are ruff’d out, yet every thing incomplete. C

^m Job xiv. 14, 15.

ⁿ Acts xxvi. 8.

† ’Tis to be understood Mechanicus is the finisher.

10 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or
pleat. ——— The callipers drawn, but
the distances of the holes throw some
wheels too shallow, others too deep.—
The movement's made, yet the wheels
are rather forced than fitted in the
frame. ——— The motion is much the
same; and even dial-plate, spring,
chain, and every other article, is more
or less imperfect.

Fla. A lively representation of the
case of man, as being a descendant
from Adam. In this state, if I may
be allowed the expression, all is but
ruffed out, and nothing fitted for spi-
ritual performance. • “The natural
“man knoweth not the things of God,
“neither can he, for they are spiritu-
“ally discerned.” ——— Without a se-
cond birth (the finishing stroke) what
are the works of any individual? ———
You speak of wheels in this state, being
rather forced than fitted: so is it with
them; all their doings proceed from
slavish fear, not from love. Were they
not apprehensive of eternal torments
being

• Rom.

the WATCH SPIRITUALIZED. II

being prepared for the ungodly, they would wallow themselves in iniquity, as the sow in the mire. — Take away the certainty of punishment, and they would roll sin, as a sweet morsel, under their tongues. — If you added weight, would not that be sufficient to make it perform ?

Mec. No; for meeting each other, no one will give way, while the more substantial parts would crush the weaker to pieces.

Fla. Is it not thus with carnal men? let your reproof be ever so weighty, it will be found unseasonable; and unless the Lord sets in, ineffectual. — There's not the most distant hope it should be otherwise; "who can bring
" a clean thing out of an unclean? not
" one:"^p as well might "the Ethio-
" pian change his skin, or the leopard
" his spots, as they do good who are

C 2

"ac-

^p Job.

^a Isaiah.

12 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or

“accustomed to do Evil :” — when finished, I suppose, these difficulties are removed.

Mec. Entirely : pivots are made—holes sized——wheels set of a proper depth—spring hooked in and adjusted—the verge finished — pendulum spring put to — and the whole acts with such freedom and ease, as produces the lively motion you now see.

Fla. Thus when the Lord comes in a way of mercy, he ejects the strong man of his hold, and puts himself in possession, gains upon the affections, subdues the obstinate passions, removes the stony from the heart, and makes them a willing people in the day of his power : then a happy alteration takes place, the wheels of obedience are oil'd with love, and they run with alacrity the ways of his commandments ; whose ways are now ways of pleasantness, and whose paths become paths of peace,

Mec.

Mec. I often think of the change,
and rejoice with trembling. These
lines express my thoughts upon it.

I.

“ When with my mind devoutly press’d,
“ Dear Saviour! my revolving breast
“ Would past offences trace ;
“ Trembling I make the black review,
“ Yet pleas’d behold, admiring too,
“ The pow’r of changing grace.

II.

“ This tongue, with blasphemies defil’d,
“ These feet, to erring paths beguil’d,
“ In heav’nly league agree.
“ Who would believe such lips could praise,
“ Or think my dark and winding ways
“ Should ever lead to thee ?

III.

“ These eyes, that once abused their sight,
“ Now lift to thee their wat’ry light,
“ And weep a silent flood ;
“ These

14 *MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or*

" These hands ascend in ceaseless pray'r;
" Oh! wash away the stains they wear,
" In pure redeeming blood.

IV.

" These ears that, pleas'd, could entertain
" The midnight oath, the lustful strain,
" When round the festal board,
" Now, deaf to all th'enchanted noise,
" Avoid the throng, detest the joys,
" And long to hear thy word.

V.

" Thus thou art serv'd in ev'ry part :
" Oh! wouldst thou but transform my
" heart,
" That drossy thing refine ;
" That grace might nature's strength
" controul,
" And a new creature,—body, soul,
" Be all,—be ever thine."

Fla.

* Hervey's Letters, vol. II. p. 345.

Fla. They are very suitable on the occasion, and are quite consonant to what the great apostle of the gentiles declares to the believing Ephesians :
“ And you (says he) hath he quicken-
“ ed, who were dead in trespasses and
“ sins.”* — Pray does not the main spring take possession of that little box ?

Mec. It does ; and, with it, the barrel arbour.

Fla. By this I understand, the watch is enabled to answer the purposes designed.

Mec. Your conceptions are very just : it is indeed, with great propriety, called the main spring. The most elaborate performance, without this, were an useless toy : no longer than while it exerts its power, may we expect to receive any satisfaction for our labour.

Fla.

* Eph. ii. 1.

Fla. What the main-spring is to the watch, that, and more, is Christ to believers. In short, what were mankind without him? no more than the beauties of nature at midnight; without this "Sun of Righteousness arising," worse than Egyptian darkness overspreads the whole.

Mec. That it is a hidden spring, may make it also applicable to Christ.

Fla. You did well to remember it: who, by search, (except of the business) would conceive it lay there? — And so, with regard to the image of Christ, who would expect to find it stamp'd upon fallen creatures, had not the Word said, we are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ? who would have looked for so intimate an union, if we were not assured, we were "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones?"

Mec.

[†] Mal. iv. 2.

[•] Eph. v. 30.

Mec. Paul, to his Colossian converts, forms an argument from this truth, to set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth ; for, says he, ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ, in God ; and when he, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye appear with him in glory.

Fla. I seldom read this comfortable truth, but I reflect on the weak reproaches of carnal men : how should the possessors of godliness be rather moved with pity, than thereby stirred up to anger, remembering their Redeemer's words, " Father, forgive them, " they know not what they do." —

Alas ! they know nothing of that hidden life, which, even here, more than makes amends for every reflection thrown upon them. But what is this to what they shall shortly enjoy, seeing (give me leave again to repeat it) when

D

Christ,

18 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or

Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory.—

Mec. Comfortable words indeed!—wherefore then “do the heathen rage, and why do the people imagine such vain things. He that sitteth in the heavens, shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.”

Fla. In one instance more, let us pursue the similitude. It is an act of condescension for the main-spring to enter the barrel, is it not?

Mec. Why, if we have respect to its length, it does appear so.

Fla. But how does our Lord stoop, when he bows the heavens, and comes down unto us; when he, who dwells in light inaccessible, is also pleased to reside in the humble heart! amazing
con-

[* Psa. ii. 1, and 4.

condescension ! How proud should we be of this glorious visitant, and how earnestly intreat, he will not take his Holy Spirit from us.——The barrel, in which the main-spring suffers itself to be contained, may denote the human body ; of which Paul says, of believers, “ know ye not that your “ bodies are temples of the Holy “ Ghost :” our Lord, to this purpose, says, if any man is beloved of my father, we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. John also bears a testimony, that our fellowship is with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

Mec. Isaiah, when he will declare his conversion, says, "I also saw the Lord, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple."²—

Fla. The barrel arbour, laying hold
of the spring, may be descriptive of
D 2 faith.

y r Cor. vi. 19.

2 Isa. v. 1.

faith, which lays hold on Christ, and of those blessings he procures for his people. Thus Jacob, in that memorable night, when terrified at the appearance of his brother Esau, being possessed of this grace, lays hold of the uncreated angel, and will "not let him go, except he bless him." —
How shall we proceed?

Mec. The great wheel stands next in action; let it be so in my friend's remarks.

Fla. Is this the leading wheel? methinks it is unfit for that office, it travels at so slow a rate. I should rather think it the pattern of slothfulness than industry, was it not contrary to proof: I should be inclined to think it stood still.

Mec. Its pace is quite consistent with its office; and when one considers to
how

how many others it is connected, it remains not matter of surprise it moves so slow.

Fla. May not the certainty of its motion, yet in a measure insensibly, prefigure the second appearance of our Lord, when he comes without sin unto salvation? Multitudes, I fear, there be, that say, "where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." — But, as Peter says, "be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, (as some men count slackness) but is long suffering to us-ward; for yet, a very little while, and he that is to come will come, and will not tarry."

Mec.

22 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or

Mec. Admitting, that that time be not so near as we conceive, yet how soon will our thread run out, and we, in some measure, be conversant with that day of terrors, unless cloathed with the righteousness of Christ.

Fla. Or were our days, with Methuselah, nine hundred and sixty nine, how quickly should we arrive at that period, and how inconsiderable would be such a date, compared with the startling views of an opening eternity!

Mec. How should this engage us to "redeem time, because our days are "evil," and cause us to be upon our watch-tower, lest we be surprized with the midnight cry.

Fla. A consideration of meeting with an incensed God, has oft'n made me tremble, lest, as David says, "he "tear me in pieces, and there be none "to

“to deliver.”^s — O that, on the contrary, I may be only viewed as considered in Christ ! Then shall such fears be banished far from me, while, in his strength, I be enabled to come forth with joy, and say, Lo, this is my God ; I have waited for him ; now will I be glad and rejoice in his salvation. — I observe something to arise out of this wheel, in a conical form.

Mec. 'Tis the fusée, so formed, that the draft may be equal.

Fla. It almost shews forth then, tho' in silence, that gracious promise, “As thy day is, so shall thy strength be.” — Was not the Christian persuaded that, when he passes through the fire, whether material, or of persecution, he will be with them, and through the floods of ungodly men, sin, or sorrow, they shall not overflow upon him, how
could

24 MECHANICUS *and* FLAVEN, *or*

could he be supported through this vail of tears, or how encounter with such formidable opposition.

Mec. But knowing that we have not an ^s "high-priest who cannot be touched "with the feeling of our infirmities," encourages us. — "Jesus Christ, being "the same yesterday, to-day, and for "ever," enables them to go forward, and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

Fla. The chain I have always looked upon as curious.

Mec. It deserves your notice, and is undoubtedly a great improvement from gut, formerly used for the same purpose. — The links, though very diminutive, are vastly strong, and, like valiant soldiers, will not easily be parted.

Fla.

^s Heb.

Fla. Wonderful indeed ! but more glorious that chain of truths, mentioned by the apostle Paul, to the believing Romans ; who, speaking of the called of God, and of all things working together for their good, says, “ for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”¹ —

Neither is your chain altogether so ornamental as that mentioned by Dr. Gill, which he supposes to be in the possession of every believer, though your links are more numerous. — As I perceive his Canticles are at hand, I will, with your leave, read that part of his note, on chap. i. and 10th verse.

E

Mee:

¹ Rom.

Mec. In so doing you will much oblige me; it is ever new and entertaining.

Fla. I find the whole verse runs thus. * “Thy cheeks are comely with
“rows of jewels, thy neck with chains
“of gold.” ——— When after having
given two senses of the chain, he says,
Or, 3dly. (it may mean) “the various
“graces of the spirit, with which not
“only ministers, but all believers are
“adorned: for as sins and vices are so
“chained and linked together, that
“where there’s one, there’s all; so the
“graces of the spirit are like chains of
“gold, which are so closely linked to-
“gether, that they cannot be sepa-
“rated; but where there’s one grace,
“there’s every grace; which very much
“beautify and adorn the believer. This
“golden chain of grace, which is put
“about the church’s neck, consists of
“these

* Can. i. 10.

“ these ten links: the first is faith,
“ that precious pearl, and valuable
“ jewel, which is alike precious in all
“ the saints, as to its nature and ob-
“ ject, the fruit of electing love, the
“ father’s gift, the son’s grace, and
“ the spirit’s work. The second is
“ hope; which is called a good hope
“ through grace: this carries the soul
“ chearfully through all the difficulties
“ of life, and makes not ashamed at
“ death: it is both the Christian’s
“ anchor and his helmet; ’tis valuable
“ in its nature, and useful in its actings.
“ The third link in this golden chain
“ is love, which is the fulfilling of the
“ law; this is highly valued by Christ,
“ see ch. iv. and x. and is of so great a
“ price, that if a man would give all
“ the substance of his house for it, it
“ would utterly be contemned, ch. viii. 7.
“ The fourth is humility; which is,
“ in the sight of God, of great price;
“ and the believer, being cloathed with
“ it, appears very beautiful and come-
“ ly; it is a sparkling gem in this
E 2 “ necklace.

28 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or

“ necklace. The fifth is patience ;
“ which is of exceeding use in the be-
“ liever's life, much recommends his
“ character and profession, and is great-
“ ly taken notice of by Christ ; see
“ Rev. ii. 2, 3, 19. The sixth is self-
“ denial ; which is required of, and
“ should be in exercise in all Christ's
“ followers, but seldom appears in its
“ lustre and splendor, being frequently
“ sullied by carnal and selfish prin-
“ ciples and actions. The seventh is
“ contentment in every state of life :
“ this is an exceeding great rarity ; few
“ persons are possessed of this jewel ;
“ the apostle Paul had it, as appears
“ from what he says, I have learned
“ in whatsoever state I am, to be con-
“ tent. The eighth is a saving know-
“ ledge of Jesus Christ : this is eternal
“ life itself, and is by believers pre-
“ ferred to all things of this life ; who,
“ with the apostle, count all things but
“ loss, for the excellency of the know-
“ ledge of Christ Jesus, their Lord,
“ The ninth is long-suffering and for-
“ bearance ;

“bearance; whereby saints are not
“easily provoked, and do readily for-
“give those who have offended them:
“this gives great grace, and is exceed-
“ing ornamental to the believer.
“The tenth and last link in this golden
“chain is sincerity: this runs through
“all other graces, and makes them so
“glorious as they are: this was ex-
“ceeding bright, and shone with a
“great deal of lustre in Nathaniel, of
“whom Christ said, behold an Israel-
“ite indeed, in whom is no guile.” —

—— *Flaven* closing the book, his friend could not forbear saying, O that henceforward this golden chain may be frequent in my sight! may my handling this bring it often to my remembrance.

Fla. Against this I’ve no objection; but rather may we both thirst through grace to possess the whole, and more earnestly implore we may not want any one particular. — Ere we proceed
any

30 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or
any farther, (you'll excuse my ignorance) I can't help observing the different strength of the wheels, and the various mixture of steel and brass——
This wheel, that at present engages us, is strong and weighty, while that you call the balance-wheel seems hardly sufficient to sustain the shock it continually endures.

Mec. In proportion to the pressure upon them is the variety you see.

Fla. Were they to retain the same size and form, yet if all was steel, would not the watch, with the same usage, wear much longer?

Mec. Not an hour; for as a pinion of 6 moves in a wheel of 48 teeth, it's work is much the harder, as it must go 8 times as fast, and so every leaf be almost upon constant wear, while a great part of the wheel enjoys a considerable rest.

Fla.

Fla. Then I find each has according to his strength, and the business given him to do. — So is it with us, no more than we shall be able to bear; yet sufficient is the day for the evil thereof, as Mr. Hervey somewhere observes — Has God given patience to Job, it shall appear by affliction: has he given wisdom to Solomon, his peaceable kingdom shall spread it abroad. Is Paul full of words, the very place of his imprisonment shall make way for employment. Is John slow in speech, he shall retire to the solitary island of Patmos: and I may add, if David be expert in war, Saul shall pursue him as a blood-hound; and if Daniel and the three children be courageous, the former shall be cast into the lion's den, and the latter committed to the fiery flames: — thus all excel in their proper character, and each is fitted for what he is called unto. — The whole of the wheels, considered as performing various revolutions, yet all to bring about

32 *MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or*
about one end, seems descriptive of the
wonders in providence.

Mec. In that the winds blow contrary.

Fla. Only to our apprehensions : indeed where men know nothing of a secret, as well as revealed will in God, there is likely to be much to stumble at, and will be found sufficient to occasion a fall.

Mec. I imagine in this you receive a hint from the prophet Ezekiel.

Fla. I confess I had the prophet in view, who, setting forth the intricacies of Providence, uses the same metaphors. — Have you ever read, or heard any discourse on this subject ?

Mec. Not to my remembrance, save what's recorded in the Bible.

Fla.

Fla. There is no necessity of seeking further; yet I have seen the most remarkable picked out and ranged together, joined with some later instances, which make a most striking appearance.

Mec. Who, I pray you, has presented this pleasing work?

Fla. Mr. Elisha Cole,¹ and Mr. Flavel; where all that I have said is more than found: there nature forgets to work, and frequently stands still to oblige the creature; the fire ceaseth to be hot, and the furious waves to overflow; the cruel beasts lose their wonted power, and crafty men forget their cunning: there (as Mr. Hervey says of the sacred word) “is more than all the marvellous of romance, connected with all the precision and sanctity of truth.”^m

F

Mec.

¹ See Cole's Sovereignty, and Flavel on Providence.

^m Ther. and Asp. Vol. I. p. 21.

Mec. How eclipsed then are the glories of our God, to those who only see him as the God of nature, and miss these views of Providence !

Fla. And (tho' the most enlightened see but little) what prospects do they rather lose, who never saw him as the God of grace and glory.—The wheels being set of a proper depth, now, as you observe, move freely, and of themselves make no stoppages.

Mec. This reminds us of these poetical lines, that run thus.

“ Could but our tempers move like this
 “ machine,
 “ Not urg'd by passion, or delay'd by
 “ spleen ;
 “ But true to nature's regulating pow'r,
 “ By virtuous deeds distinguish ev'ry hour ;
 “ Then

"Then health and peace would follow,
"as they ought,
"The laws of motion, and the laws of
"thought ;
"Sweet happiness to pass the present
"moments o'er,
"And everlasting joys when time shall
"be no more."

These lines I've been very fond of.

Fla. And why are they lessen'd in
my friend's esteem ?

Mec. By reason I now know they give
too great a reward to the fulfiller of the
wish ; for was it practicable, how in-
sufficient would it be to lay a foundation
for eternal happiness, since even then
we should have done no more than our
duty, and so remain unprofitable ser-
vants.

Fla. Nothing, Mechanicus, short of
the righteousness of Christ, will, as your

words imply, be in any measure fit to build our hopes upon: this is the only foundation; for other foundation can no man lay, save that that is laid in Jesus Christ.—This is the rock that abides the storm of God's wrath; all other, like the deceitful sand, in time of distress, will give way——A small matter, free as they move, I imagine, would disconcert the whole, or occasion a full stop.

Mec. The smallest imaginable; a very thin hair would sooner effect it than you could walk across the Room.

Fla. And wherein do we differ? Have I not seen the timorous Christian startle at his own shadow, like Nicodemus “come by night,” and slide away by stealth? If, perchance, a Christian friend has met him, and given him but the common salutation, how has it discomposed him, and put him to the stand——Or, with the more experienced soldier, how soon is he overcome;
how

how frequent does that grievous thing come to pass, the servant get the upper-hand, and sin for a while be triumphant.—Or, when trying dispensations come, if left, how soon are we saying, with peevish Jonah, “I do well to be “angry, even unto death.”—O Lord, what trifles foil us, and how do even mole-hills seem insuperable, unless thou impart strength; then mountains become plains before us; then we can “walk thro’ the valley of the shadow “of death, and fear no evil,”^p unless thou give faith; then we know “the “Lord is our shepherd; we shall not “want.”——The continual tremor of the balance wheel gives me pain to behold it; ’tis as tho’ it was anxious to get forward, yet perpetually meets with disappointment.

Mec. It certainly would go at a very great rate, was it not for the verge, whose

^p Jon. iv. 9.

^p Psa. xxiii. 1, 4.

38 MECHANICUS *and* FLAVEN, or
whose two pallats perpetually crosse its
endeavours.

Fla. Thus the new born soul pants
after holiness, as the hart after the wa-
ter brooks ; and very considerable would
soon be its progress, was it not for two
things, viz. Satan and a wicked heart,
which, like those pallats, continually
thwart our intentions.

Mec. Well, henceforth, little wheel,
I'll learn to pity thee, from a sensibility
of my own condition.

Fla. And learn this also, to be incess-
antly labouring against them—they are
of brittle metal, who knows but they
may soon break ? but however, be that
as it may, we know, “ resist the devil,
“ and he will flee from us.”

Mec. Having now surveyed the prin-
cipal parts of the movement, we will, if
you please, ascend the upper story.

Fla.

Fla. Before we do, let me observe how beneficial would be such a conduct in every matter before us, seeing he that "humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased." To say, Go down lower, is uncouth words to proud creatures; yet, however, St. James's man, with "a gold ring and goodly apparel," be now honoured, who can tell but he may soon hear that more unpleasant sound, "Friend, how camest thou hither.?"

Mec. When I think of that and other instances, the apostle's supposition much terrifies me, "If so be that, being clothed, we shall not be found naked." "

Fla. Indeed, my friend, professions among men, however specious or gilded, will not avail us; learning and gifts

^s Jam. ii. 2.

^u 2 Cor. v. 3.

gifts will be insufficient to support us ; if this be our only clothing, our nakedness must appear ; in Christ Jesus "circumcision availeth not any thing, but "a new creature:" in short, any thing destitute of his spotless righteousness, and that alone for salvation, will, in the end, be found a covering too scanty to wrap us about, and a bed too short to stretch ourselves upon. ——— In what a lively manner does the balance cross, yet it seems not to have its full play.

Mec. The balance is restrained, but in such a method as no ways infringes its liberty."

Fla. There is something in that then like the foreknowledge of God ; to whom tho' events be certain, yet it lays on us no coactive necessity to do this or that ; tho' he knew ("for known unto

"Every one, acquainted with the acting of the pendulum spring, can easily explain this paradox ; for tho' in some measure confined by it, it receives life from it."

the WATCH SPIRITUALIZED. 41

“unto him are all things from the beginning”) that Adam should become an easy prey to the subtilty of Satan, yet all Adam did was free, and had grace sufficient to stand; nor does its falling out to the contrary prove it otherwise.

Mec. Not any more than tho’ I had written before me your transactions for a week to come; tho’ I should certainly know them, yet in what would you be constrained? It may be, here you might come short, and there exceed your former intentions, yet all would fall out according to my plan.

Fla. The bars of the balance, if I’m not deceived, do not move round.

Mec. Nor yet one half of the way; for ere it has measured that space, our little warrior^y forces it back; which being met by the opposite tooth, keeps
G up

^y The balance wheel; see p. 37.

42 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or
up the continual fray that a little while
ago claimed our attention.

Fla. Methinks it is in a painful situation, nor much unlike those frothy professors, who, notwithstanding all their bustle, are yet wanting of the root of the matter, moving but backward and forward, like the door on its hinges.— The turning that little index makes my watch go faster or slower; but how it should have that effect I can't conceive.

Mec. It being joined to a steel wheel, the turning it moves a curb, which, according to the increase or decrease of the numbers, lengthens or shortens the pendulum-spring, and so abates or increases the watch's motion.

Fla. Thus when we turn our eyes upon ourselves, contemplate our unworthiness, and where the just demerit of sin might long since have left us, it causes an abatement in our wonted vigour,

gour, and, if no supply be at hand, we are soon ready to think we have no right to take his holy name in our unpolluted lips; when, on the contrary, if by faith we can consider ourselves in Christ, see him become the end of the law for righteousness to us who believe, as satisfying divine justice in our room and stead, and has risen again for our justification, then our affections grow unbounded, and we are like the psalmist, saying, whom have I in heaven but thee, and whom on earth do I desire in comparison of thee? — That name and number reminds me of what John, in vision, had a sight of, *Rev. xiv. 1.* And I looked, and lo, a lamb stood on mount Sion, and with him an hundred and forty four thousand, having his father's name written in their foreheads.

Mec. The prophet *Isaiah* also records the mighty God as saying, I have engraven thee on the palms of my hands, and thy walls are continually before me.

Fla. O! that our names may be found written in the lamb's book of life, and that when the Lord numbers up his jewels, we may each make one in that great account, and be among (tho' the least that's there) that innumerable company which no man can number.——Here a request was made by Flaven to have the watch dissected; in which his friend being willing to gratify him, immediately complied. — After spending a few moments in reflecting on its performance at half time, it was soon taken to pieces. — The number of holes in both plates soon commanded Flaven's notice, and being unable to know their use, caused him to say, what irregularity is here! I can't help suspecting but this must be the excursions of fancy, rather than the dictates of reason.

Mec. This is what I called the cal-liper,^z and the distances of the holes are
now

^z See p. 9.

now proper,^a as the opportunity we have had in seeing its performance confirm.

Fla. Excuse my rashness, and let my ignorance atone for my folly : but, O thou gracious God, who art “righteous in all thy ways, and holy in all thy works,”^b pardon a censuring mortal, and let me know my Redeemer has atoned for such offences.^c — How often (O may my ignorance obtain mercy) have I dared to think thy ways were unequal ; how often thought thee a rigid master, expecting brick, denying straw : but for these things, as helped, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

Mec. Have you then reason to cry out in this manner ? It emboldens me ; I saw the similitude, but being guilty, durst not shew my opinion,

Fla.

^a See p. 11.

^b Psal. cxlv. 17.

^c i. e. Have a sense thereof.

Fla. Have I? — who has been exempted? It's an epidemical distemper; but worse in one respect, seeing they who have had it, may have it again. — I bless God, frequent prayer has of late kept it much at an under; has made me willing to wait for that time when dark things will be made light, and the crooked things be made strait; has here brought me to know that the “judge of the whole earth will do “right,” and when afflictive dispensations come, helps me to say, “it is “the Lord, let him do whatsoever he “will.” — Pray what is that little bit of steel, and what may be its use? which seems to have no communication to any part except the stud to which it is pin'd, and a small spring that runs under it.

Mec. It's called the stop,^f which by that spring is raised above the plate, to admit

^a Gen.

^f Known in general by gardigut stop.

admit the cap of the fusee a free passage; but when the chain is almost drawn from off the barrel, it binds it down, prevents the person that winds up his watch from making too many turns, and secures it from many harms. .

Fla. The dealing of God with his chosen people is much after this sort, and the unexpected meeting with that resistance has something of that sovereign authority that says to sinners, hitherto shalt thou come, and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be staid. — Or if we respect the Lord's carriage to the wicked, it is somewhat similar, for, like the fusee, they run the round of several years without interruption; but when the chain of God's forbearance is almost at an end, or the measure of their sin filled up, a full stop is near at hand; “their

48 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or
“ their foot shall slide in due time, and
“ the things that come upon them shall
“ make haste.”

Mec. Tho’ vengeance be the Lord’s
“ strange work,” yet it is his, and he
will repay it.

Fla. By what name do you call that
worm?

Mec. The endless screw. — And if
you’ll please to observe its actings with
that key, you will know with what pro-
priety it is so called. — Flaven, on
trying it, observe.

Fla. My fruitless endeavours to ac-
complish what I imagined, at first view,
would be soon done, reminds me of
the delusive and frequent attempt of
man seeking to be justified by the
works of the law : how practicable all
think this at first, yet, in the end,
are certainly disappointed : they weary
themselves

themselves for very vanity, and labour for that which profiteth not.

Mec. Yet no one takes warning ; but, as tho' he either disbelieved such accounts, or were more confident of himself, he will make the trial.

Fla. But what's more unaccountable, the basest among men are as warm contenders for this as the most moral — Ask the drunkard of his hopes of eternal life, and you will find they are built upon what he calls the mercy of God, and his better deeds. — Liquor, 'tis true, he loves too much, and swearing and gaming he uses more than he could wish ; but a liar he hates ; theft he abhors ; he injures no one but himself ; which, he conceives, demands rather pity than reproof : thus each, in their sphere, puts the evil day far from them, and heals his wounds by that unwise method of measuring himself with others.

Mec. They do not consider God has said, whosoever shall “keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all; for he that said, do not commit adultery, said also, do not kill.”^h

Fla. Nor do they once consider the law given as a rule of life, but as a covenant of works, tho’ it does nothing but condemn: if they did, and it came with power, sin would revive, and they would die; every view of Christ would then be both welcome and precious, and his name Jesus be as ointment poured forth. — Flaven, here viewing the main pottance, discovered the banking pins; who desiring to be informed of their use and end, Mechanicus replied.

Mec. These prevent much confusion, and greatly contribute to the watch’s regular

^h Jam. ii. 10, 11.

regular performance; but for these, and upon every considerable shock, it would be disabled, the verge would overturn, and the balance-wheel be in danger of receiving much injury.

Fla. God's faithfulness and power thus keep his people; but for these, and they soon would have more than they can bear, and fall a sacrifice to the cruel temptations of Satan: but where true grace is, this defence is not wanting; for however, at times, they may be foil'd, yet in the end they shall be enabled to say, I am more than conqueror, thro' him that loveth me.

Mec. Was it not inconsistent with our design of getting through, and trespassing on our time, I should on this head, though I am far from discrediting what you advance, desire to be answered several questions, but I leave it to a more seasonable opportunity, and hope Flaven will also do me the justice to believe my not endeavouring to cause

52 MECHANICUS *and* FLAVEN, *or*
him to inlarge, has been occasioned by
such reflections as these, and a desire to
have nothing material omitted.

Fla. There needs no apology ; my
design was to be very brief, and not-
withstanding I am, I perceive it will
be full time to conclude, when the lit-
tle remainder has passed our examina-
tion.——At present I'm engaged with
viewing a moveable piece of brass in
this pottance, but know nothing of the
necessity of its so doing, or what you
call it.

Mec. 'Tis the dufftail, the small
hole which receives the balance-wheel
pivot ; and its sliding gives an oppor-
tunity of placing the wheel to the best
advantage, which can act no where but
in one certain place, found by the duff-
tail's removal ; the 20th part of an inch
forward or backward would make it of
none effect.

Fla.

Fla. It would retain the name of a dufftail, I presume, tho' it answered not the end.

Mec. Undoubtedly; and as deservedly as some retain the name of men, tho' they act like brutes.

Fla. Thus improperly some works are called good among men, that have the form, but are destitute of the end designed. — Whatever has an outside shew, as charity, sobriety, attending the means, &c. now goes by many for current coin; but these, tho' good in themselves, unless in a certain proper place, will not only be of none effect, but displeasing to God, however laudable in our sight — If wanting of faith and love, they become sinful; for whatever is not of faith, is sin. — The Lord says, he seeth not as man seeth; and indeed, the principal difference in this lies, he views the root, and we the fruit: wear they ever so gilded an appearance,

54 MECHANICUS *and* FLAVEN, *or*

appearance, if it is not done with a view to glorify God, without the least dependence thereon for salvation, (seeing it is not by works of righteousness we have done) they will be treated with contempt, and rewarded only with pains insupportable; for as his own arm brought salvation, he will not give his glory to another. — The motion next came under their inspection; when, after discoursing of its scanty room, and its hidden situation, the gilding of the plates, cock, and slide detained them. — See, said Flaven, what a great advantage this; every attempt to polish, how vastly inferior! The faded yellow those parts wear, serves but as a foil to set off the beauty of these: so, tho' man excel in moral acts, yet how vastly inferior to those who wear this garment of sanctification, which this gilding well prefigures; this is of a lasting nature, that of a short duration: in short, where this is, works will keep their place, and be useful, tho' not for salvation; but where that's want-

ing,

ing, they'll be more destructive than water and fire unrestrained.

Mec. I wish I may live under an habitual belief of these truths, and that all my works may proceed from love to him who has redeemed me, without once desiring to build thereon a foundation for eternal happiness. I beg I may work from, not for, life; then, if fruitful in them, I shall in some measure shew myself friendly to that friend who sticketh closer than that of a brother.

Fla. That bow of polish'd steel is, I think, the spring that confines the watch in the box.

Mec. The locking spring is for that use.

Fla. So should every particular church be "a spring shut up, a fountain seal'd:" all their private transactions should be hid from the prying eye of busy bodies,
and

* See Dr. Gill on Cant. iv. 12.

56 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or
and only free access granted to its own
members.

Mec. But this spring knows no difference ; it gives way to all, and freely lets every judge behold the infirmities within.

Fla. I'm sorry to say, the case with them is too similar ; and that the weakness and failings of one another are as much exposed. — As the gilding may prefigure the inward garment of sanctification, so the box, or more firm covering, the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which, as that shields the watch from injuries, so it shields the Christian from those bruises which otherways would be very fatal. This is their only defence and safety ; hither the righteous flee and are safe ; this shields them from every storm, and frees them from every danger : when this is viewed, as theirs, by faith, they then can say, who “ shall lay any thing to the
“ charge

“charge of God’s elect?” or if they do, to what will it amount? seeing ’tis God that “justifieth, who is he “that condemns? when ’tis Christ “thad died, yea rather, that is risen “again, and ever lives to interceed for “us.”^k — The outside case may be descriptive of that happy government we enjoy under his present Majesty, King George III. — This toleration, which he has been pleased so lately to confirm,[†] is the Christians outside coat, which we should jointly endeavour, by good and loyal behaviour, to keep as long as possible, and for which we ought to be abundantly thankful. May the Lord give us grace to use such privileges aright, and to be valiant for his cause, while he thus lets us sit under our own vine and fig-tree, and lets none make us afraid. — But see, dear friend, how insensibly has time stole away, and how

I soon

^k Rom. xiii. 33, 34.

[†] Alluding to his Majesty’s answer to the protestant dissenters address.

58 MECHANICUS and FLAVEN, or
soon have the shadows of the even come
upon us; those hands that seemingly
stand still, have made a long remove,
and we're informed by yonder clock an-
other hour's just gone.¹

Mec. How soon shall our place on
earth know us no more!

Fla. What need then to beg, with
Moses, that we may be taught to
“number our days, that we may ap-
ply our hearts unto wisdom.”^m O that
we may finish our course with joy, re-
membering that by and by we shall
reap if we faint not: yea, very soon
it may be; hear those soul-reviving
words, well done, thou good and faith-
ful servant; enter thou into the joy
of thy Lord.

Mec. But a consideration, “he that
“is filthy, let him be filthy still, may
“be sealed in court to day; depart
“from me, ye cursed may be pronoun-
ced

¹ It has given warning.

^m Psa. xc. 12.

“ced at the bar to-morrow,”^a—gives me much concern.

Fla. It should make the apostle's words come with great weight, when he says, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall ; there's in us room sufficient for uneasiness, but none for despair : “ fear not, but be “ glad and rejoice, for the Lord will do “ great things.”^o Was salvation on the foot of obedience, I would give you no encouragement ; but, blessed be God, 'tis otherways ; 'tis all a free gift ; the gift of God is eternal life ; “ we are “ saved by grace, thro' faith ; but that “ not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.”^p

^a See Rutherford on baptism, Sermon. p. 1.

^o Joel ii. 21.

^p Eph. ii. 8.

F I N I S.

474/41

the WATSON'S PRINTER.
"ced at the bar to-morrow" — gives
me much concern.

FW. It should make the apostle's
words come with great weight when
he says, let him that thinketh he stand-
eth, take heed lest he fall: there's in
us room sufficient for unsteadiness, but
none for despair: "fear not, but be
glad and rejoice, for the Lord will do
"great things." Was salvation on
the foot of obedience, I would give you
no encouragement; but blessed be God,
in other ways, in all a free gift: the
gift of God is eternal life: "we are
saved by grace, thro' faith," but that
"not of ourselves, it is the gift of God."

See Rutherford's edition, Gen. p. 11.
Job. ii. 21.

F I N I S



